

Utah State Library Collection Proposal for Change*

3/3/2022

*This proposal is specific to the Library Resources collections in the State Library building and is not meant to apply to the collections of the Blind Library Program or the Bookmobiles.

There are five major collection areas at the Utah State Library that are *actively* being developed as directed by the Collection Development Policy:

1. **General Popular Collection**—Fiction and non-fiction titles acquired for the purpose of supplementing ILL services. “Attention is given to requests by Utah’s smaller public libraries to fulfill the needs of their patrons for materials beyond that which can be provided by their own collections.”
2. **Book Buzz**—“Sets of books that are geared towards book groups of various ages, interests and backgrounds.”
3. **Utah Collection**—The USL “strives to collect and retain a **comprehensive** body of Utah materials” including “materials related to Utah, its history, geology, and culture, including works residents of Utah produce as authors or publishers.”
4. **Professional Development**—This collection is “a resource for all Utah Library staff and contains a wide-ranging selection of materials about the library profession.”
5. **State Documents**—mandated by Utah State Code.

Proposal

We propose that the USL shifts resources (staff time and budget) from the general popular collection, which is primarily dedicated to supplementing interlibrary loan services (ILL) to other areas where there is a greater need such as Book Buzz, the Utah Collection, and the Professional Development Collection. These collections have received less attention than what has been needed.

Justification

1. We do not circulate to the general public so the sole purpose of the general popular collection is to supplement ILL services.

2. It is not necessary for us to maintain a popular collection to ensure the success of ILL services. In fact, efforts to increase circulation of the popular collection have often come at the cost of good service to our ILL patrons¹.
3. Focus on the popular collection has kept us from improving and cultivating other areas where there is a greater need/or demand.
 - a. Book Buzz is a highly popular service that keeps growing and would benefit from additional funding.
 - b. We have not been collecting Utah materials “comprehensively.” The focus has been on updating the general/popular collection in an attempt to increase circulation.
 - c. Our collection of fiction materials by Utah authors is sporadic and unintentional. There currently isn’t a repository in the state that makes a concerted effort to comprehensively collect creative works and works of fiction by Utah authors. This is a gap that the State Library could fill.
 - d. The professional development collection is a valuable tool for library staff across the state. With increased marketing, we could build it up to a more dynamic and relevant collection, saving our public libraries the expense of purchasing them themselves.

What This Would Mean

1. State Library would no longer purchase (or acquire through donation) items that did not fit the following criteria:
 - a. Professional development materials for library staff (or other state employees on a limited basis).
 - b. Non-fiction materials with significant Utah content (i.e. topics dealing with Utah’s history, culture, geography, etc.)
 - c. Creative works and works of fiction by Utah authors.
 - d. Book sets intended for the Book Buzz collection.
2. The State Library would make greater efforts to develop a “comprehensive” Utah collection as directed in the collection development policy through systematic searching of relevant publishers.

¹ In the past, in order to increase circulation of the general collection, if an ILL request was received for a title that was owned by the USL, but was currently checked out, the ILL was “suspended” and the requester had to wait for the book to be returned, rather than just send the ILL request on to one of our many other lending libraries in the state. Once the USL item was returned, the ILL request was re-activated and the book was sent out to the requester. This resulted in a significant delay and came at the cost of our ILL service. Additionally, if an ILL request was received for a title that was not owned by the USL, but was deemed to be a good fit for the USL collection, the ILL request was again suspended, until the title could be ordered, cataloged and processed by the USL. This actually caused a delay of literally months to the requester’s ILL request.

3. The State Library would make greater efforts to comprehensively collect creative works or works of fiction by Utah authors in order to build a repository that tells the story of how creative writing in our state has evolved over time.
4. The State Library would be able to dedicate a larger portion of its budget to these targeted areas.
5. ILL services would be streamlined because we would no longer make increasing circulation of the general popular collection a priority over timeliness of filling ILL requests.